

Opening Statement

Good morning Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, Senator Kissel, Representative O'Neill, Members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Lisa Kelly Morgan. It is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today. I want to thank Governor Rell for nominating me to be a Superior Court Judge. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to each member of this Committee for considering my nomination.

By way of background, I was raised in Enfield and graduated from Enrico Fermi High School in 1980. I received my Bachelor of Arts degree from Villanova University in 1984 and my Juris Doctor degree from the University of Connecticut School of Law in 1987.

Upon graduation from law school, I joined the Hartford law firm of Hebb & Gitlin as an associate in the litigation department. While there, I handled a variety of matters but focused mainly in the areas of contract disputes, commercial foreclosures, real estate workout negotiations and bankruptcy proceedings.

After seven years with Hebb & Gitlin, I joined two other attorneys in establishing our own firm in Hartford. I am currently president of Ruben, Morgan & Horan where I have maintained a commercial law practice for the past 16 years. I practice mainly in the areas of litigation and business law, but I have handled real estate matters as well.

In litigation matters, I represent small and large businesses, banks and individuals in the prosecution and defense of business tort claims, contract disputes, commercial foreclosures and professional liability claims. I have litigated cases in every judicial district in the State of Connecticut and in the federal courts of Connecticut, Tennessee and New York, among others. I have argued short calendar motions, conducted evidentiary hearings, tried cases as sole and chief counsel and resolved disputes through mediation and arbitration. I have also briefed and argued appeals before the Connecticut Supreme Court and the United States Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit.

In the business law area, my practice includes drafting and negotiating all types of contracts including mortgages and guarantees, buy-sell agreements and sports financing contracts. I have also represented clients in the formation of U.S. and international businesses.

I have been very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work on many unique and challenging cases throughout my legal career. I enjoy mastering new areas of the law. Overall, my practice has provided me with broad experience in many areas and the skills to learn other areas in which I have less expertise.

Throughout my legal career, I have been an active volunteer on the state and local level. I have served in leadership positions in many of those roles.

On the state level I served on the Uniform Law Commission, the Connecticut Law Revision Commission's Revised Article 9 Study Committee, the Judicial Selection Commission and the Board of Directors of the Connecticut Student Loan Foundation. On the local level I was a member of the Wethersfield Housing Authority and a Wethersfield Girl Scout troop leader.

I have also been active in several organizations which promote the advancement of women professionals such as the Connecticut Women's Council and the Hartford Association of Women Attorneys.

I have volunteered at various educational institutions and for the past three years have served as the Community Service and Field Trip Coordinator for Covenant Preparatory School. Covenant Prep is located in the YWCA building on Broad Street in Hartford. It is an independent, tuition-free, inter faith middle school for boys from under-served families in the Hartford area.

I have resided in Wethersfield for the past 20 years with my husband Tom who is an attorney with The Hartford. We have two wonderful children: our son, Dan, who is a freshman in college and our daughter Katie, who is a junior in high school. My husband and daughter are here with me today, along with my mom, my brother, my mother and father-in-law and several dear friends and colleagues. I am incredibly fortunate to have all of these people in my life and I wanted to thank them all for being here today to support me.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be considered for a position as a Superior Court Judge. I assure you that if I am appointed, I will strive each day to serve the people of Connecticut with compassion, fairness, intelligence and integrity.

Thank you for your time today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have regarding my qualifications.